
Fall 1991 First-Time Freshmen in California's Two Public Universities

A CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION FACTSHEET

The number of first-time freshmen

In Fall 1991, the downward trend in the participation of California high school graduates as first-time freshmen at the State's public universities that began in 1990 continued. The University of California enrolled 18,232 first-time freshmen from California high school — 7.1 percent of the 1990-91 graduating class — about 750 less than in Fall 1990 and some 1,500 less than in Fall 1989. The California State University enrolled 25,064 first-time freshmen — 9.8 percent of these graduates — about 2,000 less than in Fall 1990 and some 4,000 less than in Fall 1989.

These declines were due not only to a smaller high school graduating class in the State but also to a smaller *proportion* of these graduates enrolling at the State's public universities, from both public and private high schools:

	Number of High School Graduates	University of California		The California State University	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Fall 1989	268,983	19,739	7.3%	29,116	10.8%
Fall 1990	258,949	19,003	7.3%	27,094	10.5%
Fall 1991	256,211	18,232	7.1%	25,064	9.8%

The decline has been more pronounced among private high school graduates than among public high school graduates:

	Fall 1989	Fall 1990	Fall 1991
University of California			
Public High School Graduates	6.75%	6.79%	6.65%
Private High School Graduates	13.25	12.95	12.08
The California State University			
Public High School Graduates	10.17	9.94	9.32
Private High School Graduates	17.41	15.85	14.64

Participation of racial/ethnic groups

Over the last few years, the University of California has

lost some ground in its efforts to increase the proportion of California public high school graduates from under-represented racial/ethnic groups — specifically Black and Latino graduates — in its freshman class, according to data on those students who reported their racial/ethnic identity. In Fall 1989, Latino students comprised 13.7 percent of the University's freshman class from California public high schools, while Black students comprised 5.6 percent. By fall 1991, the representation of these groups had fallen to 13.5 and 4.2 percent, respectively. The representation of White graduates had also declined — from 50.3 to 44.6 percent, while the representation of Asian/Pacific Islander graduates had increased from 25.8 to 32.6 percent.

The California State University has continued to make progress in expanding the representation of Black and Latino graduates coming to its freshman class from California public high schools. Latino representation has grown from 15.3 to 21.2 percent between Fall 1989 and Fall 1991, while Black representation has expanded from 5.1 to 8.4 percent. In contrast, Asian/Pacific Islander representation grew by only 0.9 percentage points — from 18.3 to 19.2 percent, while White representation dropped from 53.6 percent to 45.3 percent.

Because these trends are strongly influenced by changes in the racial/ethnic composition of the State's public high school graduating class, it is desirable to examine the participation rates of graduates from each racial/ethnic group — that is, the proportion of each group that chooses to enroll:

	University of California			The California State University		
	1989	1990	1991	1989	1990	1991
Asian	17.0%	17.0%	18.3%	17.9%	16.6%	14.7%
Black	4.7	4.0	3.6	8.4	9.7	9.8
Filipino	8.6	8.5	8.4	18.7	18.0	14.8
Latino	4.1	3.7	3.3	6.8	7.2	7.1
White	5.5	5.5	5.3	8.7	8.0	7.4

For the University of California, this perspective illustrates declining participation of public high school graduates from every racial/ethnic groups except Asian students. At the State University, the participation of Black and Latino public high school graduates has continued to grow, while that of Asian, Filipino, and White graduates has declined.

Regional differences in participation rates

The proportion of 1990-91 high school graduates enrolling as first-time freshmen at the University of California and the California State University varies substantially among geographic regions within California, as the maps of 11 major regions below show.

University of California: The proportion of California’s 1991 high school graduates who entered the University as first-time freshmen in Fall 1991 from Orange County and the San Francisco Bay area (9.4 percent in each region) continued to be significantly above the statewide average of 7.1 percent, while the proportions from the rural areas of California — Northern California, the northern and southern Central Valley, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties — continued to be substan-

tially below the statewide average, ranging from 3.9 percent down to 3.2 percent. The Los Angeles region ranked above the mean at 8.0 percent, while the Sacramento region fell below it at 5.9 percent. Virtually at the mean were the Central Coast (6.9 percent), South Coast (7.2 percent), and San Diego-Imperial region (7.2 percent). Interestingly, the order of the regions in terms of the proportions of graduates enrolling as freshmen at the University quite closely parallels the order of the regions in terms of per capita income.

The California State University: A larger than average percentage of high school graduates from Los Angeles County, Orange County, and the San Francisco Bay Area traditionally enroll at the State University, but in Fall 1991, this was true for the first time in recent history for the southern Central Valley region: 9.9 percent, compared to 9.8 percent statewide. In contrast, the 11 regions’ lowest participation rates were the South Coast’s 6.4 percent, Riverside-San Bernardino Counties’ 6.9 percent, and the Sacramento region’s 7.2 percent. Unlike the University, the rank order of the regions in terms of State University first-time freshman participation rates has virtually no relation to their rank in terms of per-capita income.

University of California

The California State University

*Regional Participation Rates
of High School Graduates
as First-Time Freshmen,
Fall 1991*